

GUIDELINES FOR INCORPORATING OTHER FOOD/NUTRIENT DATA INTO THE NND-CNP

Background

Two issues have arisen requiring direction regarding the incorporation of other data into food-nutrient data files of the National Nutrition Database for Child Nutrition Programs (NND-CNP). First, software companies have requested to merge their pre-existing food-nutrient databases with the NNP-CNP. Second, CNP personnel must have the ability to enter locally distributed food items into the database.

Frequently, with merged databases, NND food items are duplicated (although the vendor's nutrient and measure-weight data may not match the USDA data from the NND-CNP). Also, the nutrient values for some food items are missing, or are imputed. Locally entered foods, utilizing nutrient data from a Nutrition Facts label, also often missing data for some of the 14 nutrients evaluated with NSMP software. Without controls over these situations, inaccurate data might be utilized in nutrient analysis calculation, leading to inaccurate evaluation of menus against the nutrient standards.

REQUIREMENTS

1. The NND-CNP must be preserved as the main database within the NSMP software system and the user should not have the ability to alter or delete the USDA data. The software company must delete from their existing database food items which duplicate NND-CNP food items. Food/nutrient data provided by software vendors or entered by the user should be clearly differentiated from the NND-CNP data. The source of food/nutrient information (USDA, vendor, or local), should be prominently displayed on all ingredient lists (printed and on-screen) from which user will select food items. In documentation, training, etc., vendors should instruct user to choose NND-CNP over vendor or locally entered data.
2. Although a vendor's original database may contain other nutrients, only the 14 nutrients evaluated by NSMP and provided in the NND should be maintained and analyzed in the merged database.
3. When a food item with missing or incomplete nutrient values is entered by the vendor or user into the local software database, the software system should enable the user to mark the missing values (via asterisk, hyphen, or other special character). The system must differentiate between true zero values and missing values at data entry, and on all nutrient analysis displays and printed reports. Preferably, the system should assume a value is "missing" or "unknown" unless and until a number is entered into the nutrient field. If the food item containing missing nutrient values is used in recipes or on menus, the nutrient analysis report

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of that recipe or menus must indicate that the resulting nutrient analysis contains missing nutrient values and must specify which nutrients are based in incomplete data. The software company should not impute nutrient values for any missing data.

4. The school district must have the capability to enter the nutrient of foods products not yet in the NND-CNP into the local database until those food products appear in the NND-CNP. NSMP software should also provide a mechanism for CNP personnel to delete user/vendor entered food items, when new food item are added or deleted from food contracts. When there is a new release of the NND-CNP, the software company must verify that food products in the software company's database which match updated NND-CNP food items are deleted from the local database. Locally entered food items could be matched to new NND-CNP data by Brand Name and product code fields.